

New York Saturday Evening Post A HOME WEEKLY FOR WINTER NIGHTS AND SUMMER DAYS.

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No. 304.

VANDYKE'S NEW YEAR'S LEAF.

BY T. C. HARBAUGH.

Have you heard of the leaf that Vandyke Turned one stormy New Year's night, Seated alone in his cosy parlor—
"I will tell you,
If you have not, I will tell you,
In a rhyme that shall be brief;
Though I fear he will not thank me,
For this tale of his New Year's leaf.
He was a devotee of fashion,
Did not care for pounds and pence;
Peted all who won his favor—
Spontenit in the widest sense!
Quoth he, "I have a heart,
Never won a heart by stealth;
And 'twas said by hundreds daily,
"Beggars steal Hugh Vandyke's wealth.
"Charity is Vandyke's failing.
It will prove his ruin some day.
Never from his door a beggar—
Alas! he turned away;
And they came from every quarter
Of the west country—
A despised and taunted legion—
Pensioners on Vandyke's heart!
"Too much money to the beggars!
All around my people say;
And to-night but fifty dollars
Have I for the coming day.
Fifty dollars! what a trifle!
Twenty more, we have had,
Had I from my door this morning—
Alas! sent that whining lad.
"This is New Year's night! a new leaf
I will turn and keep it down;
During this year not one dollar
To the whiners of the town!"
And that night he turned his new leaf
Said by the window fire—
Heard the snow against that window,
Heard the storm-winds mounting higher.
All at once a low rap started
Vandyke from his reverie;
And he left his cozy arm-chair,
Indignation in his eye.
"Tis a whiner," he was saying,
As he opened the parlor door;
Was it specter he confronted?
Palid face, and nothing more!
Said a low voice, "Mother's dying!
Weep for her, the angel of home,
They will shiver o'er a pillow,
For no fire warms our home;"
Let her—" Vandyke paused abruptly—
Took the child so cold and fair,
Drew her in and shut the portal;
Sat her in his velvet chair.
Chafed her hands and clothed her warmly;
A low voice—
Sent her to the dying mother—
With the contents of his purse!
And he smiled as he dismissed her—
She, a "whiner of the town;"
"Where's my New Year's leaf?" she murmured,
"God! I could not keep it down!"
Then he moved the ancient arm-chair
Closer to the roaring fire;
He heard the mad winds mounting higher,
In the golden-tinted freight.
Dreaming like a child, he slept;
No man's New Year's night was happier
Than the one Hugh Vandyke kept.

Happy Harry,

THE WILD BOY OF THE WOODS;

OR,
The Pirates of the Northern Lakes.

BY OLL COOMES,

AUTHOR OF "IDAHO TOM," "DAKOTA DAN,"
"BOWIE-KNIFE BEN," "OLD HURRICANE,"
"HAWKEYE HARRY," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE ENGLISH BRIG-OF-WAR.

HAPPY HARRY was soon far beyond the glade where he had so cunningly outwitted the king's officer and messenger. His face was all aglow with joy and triumph as he sped away through the woods, fast as his legs would carry him. He never ceased running until he reached the lake shore, where, out of breath, he sat down to rest and examine the button that the unsuspecting Englishman had intrusted to his care.

"Great hoppin' hornits! Belshazzar!" he exclaimed, wiping the perspiration from his brow, "this is jest more'n fun, arn't it, ole chum? And, mortal pizen! didn't I do it up to that Britisher slicker'n a peeled sappin'? I didn't know I war so good reachin' out with my voice. I didn't, for a sacred fact. By George! he war a kind of a spy, that red-coat, and I'd ort to 'a taken him prisoner; but then, what did I want with him after I got the feller's secret? Ho! out here, ole button. What news from the headquarters of the ole king's army? Open, my pretty silver bauble, and let it out."

After repeated efforts, he succeeded in unscrewing the button, which he found to be a mere shell of silver, the cavity of which was filled with a neatly-folded paper of the finest quality.

"Sweet Jerusalem! there lays the kernel of the silver nut!" exclaimed the youth, looking at the paper as if half afraid to touch it, for fear it would vanish like a bubble.

While thus occupied, Belshazzar uttered a low, plaintive whine.

A twig cracked in the undergrowth not far away, and was succeeded by a rustling of foliage.

Happy Harry sprung to his feet, slipped the button into his pocket, and cocked his rifle.

A man emerged from the undergrowth, and a look of profound astonishment mounted his face as he confronted the young wood-tramp.

The man was Long Beard, the Giant Wood-man.

"Hoppin' hornits!" burst from the boy's lips, and he dug his knuckles into his eyes, as if to remove a mist of doubt gathered over them, "it can't be so—it's a mistake, it is, for an ugly fact."



"Hullo, my little waif, you are safe, thank God!" said the giant, advancing toward him.

"Hullo, my little waif! you are safe, thank God," said the giant, advancing toward him.

"Safe! why, that's no name for it," replied Harry. "Great hornits! but I'm proper delighted and majestically glad to meet you. I am, for a fact, govenir. Give us your ten-acre paw—there! ooh!—squeeze gently; you've a bear's hug in that fist. But, whar ye've been keepin' your corporosity, general?"

"In the woods, on the lake, along the shore, looking for you."

"And I've been lookin' for you, general."

"Well, the objects of our search have been found. What news have you, Harry?"

"Nothin' but some good news; but wasn't them a smashin' set of fellers we bunked with 'tother night at the cave?"

"A notorious set of scoundrels, I must say," returned the giant, emphatically.

"They had you haltered up pretty snug, hadn't they, Big Beard?"

"Ay, my poy; and did you know what I do that man, Kirby Kale, you would not wonder that I was haltered up so securely."

"You don't say, do you, general? Why, great hornits! arn't they all Englishmen?"

"Most of them."

"And is Kirby Kale?"

"Yes; and as mean a man as ever breathed."

"Wal, by hornits!—but, say, Big Beard, you see that fellin' in the cave with his head tied up and arm in a sling?"

"I did; and I saw him spurn your body with his foot when you lay apparently dead in the cavern."

"That was the traitor, William Mucklewee, Esquire, whom I banged over the head and sent a-bouncing and a-waltzin' into the lake—the very demon that tried to betray Rankin into the savages' power. But, Big Beard, I think them devils at the cave are waitin' to do some awfully bloody work. I do, for a serious fact. They are English soldiers, I know they are, for I saw their uniforms stickin' around the cavern, one place and another. I think they're waitin' there in disguise for some orders to strike—in fact, I know they are; and their orders are to come through a messenger expected from Canada. And, would you believe it, general! sure as I'm livin', me and that messenger had a little difference awhile ago. He just scooped me right in a sun, moon, and stars. I wasn't hard to take, and Belshazzar, he just tucked his tail atwixt his legs and away we marched. But, suddenly, my friend of the king had a summons from different quarters to yield himself up to superior force, that war hid in the woods not far away. Before he could reply, I turned and informed him he war in what might be termed a snap, and so on. Then I told him who he was, and whar he war goin', and that I blonged at the cave and was out lookin' for him, and that I'd let him captur me for the fun of it, and a whole lot of just sich—sich funny things. This tickled the royal major of his majesty's army, and quicker'n wink! he jerked a button off his coat and handed it to me, with orders to deliver the same to Captain Kirby Kale. The fool thought he war surrounded by an army of American scouts, though not one of them could be seen, and he thought the jig war up with him. Well, I took the button, and away I went, lickety-te-split, leavin' the great English dispatch-bearer from across the briny deep, waitin' for the Americans to tie the out of the wood and salt him down. But nary scout found. The fact of it war just here: there wasn't a scout within miles of him, and for

"Oh, great hornits!" cried Happy Harry, "it's Eelelah, and she's drowned herself!"

"Nay, nay, Harry," responded Long Beard; "that girl is our friend. Those gestures were intended as a warning. Look! she is swimming around the base of that rock, evidently to reach the opposite side unobserved. Enemies to us must be approaching the point from whence we embarked—ah, there they come now!"

"Halt there!" cried Kale, at the top of his lungs, and the soldiers brought their muskets into position.

But Long Beard and Harry paid no attention to his order.

"Halt! or we'll fire!" again shouted Kale. Quicker than a flash Happy Harry threw his rifle to his shoulder and fired at the foe. A soldier fell at the feet of his comrades.

The next instant a line of smoke burst from the English ranks and the crash of twenty muskets rolled along the waves. Like hail their bullets pattered against the side of the little schooner, but Long Beard and Harry having sought shelter in the cabin escaped unharmed.

The giant at once ran up another sail and soon they were out of reach of the enemy's guns. Then the two again went on deck, and, to their surprise, saw that a number of savages had joined the English, and all together were holding a consultation.

With his field-glass Long Beard scanned the allies closely, and while thus engaged he happened to run his eye along the coast, when to his surprise and astonishment, he discovered a small sail bearing down the wind toward them. It was over a league away, yet he could see distinctly that it was a brig carrying a gun fore and aft and flying the English colors!

"By heavens, Harry!" exclaimed the giant, "an English vessel has gained our lake! Look off here and you'll see her."

Happy Harry took the glass and, having scanned the sail, confirmed his friend's statement.

"Strikes me general," he said, "that we're in a fair way for a bit of a naval engagement."

"The chances for a fight are good, but our condition to stand up to a brig carrying heavy guns is not very promising of good results."

"Our best hold lies in flight, and I shall press every inch of canvas into service and attend promptly to the helm and our course. It is now one o'clock, and it will take us until evening to reach the Pleiades."

"Well, all right, general; drive on your gig, and if thar's anything that we can assist you in doin' make a clean breast of it and we'll be on hand like a dozen warts."

"Keep a watch on the brig, Harry."

"I'll do so, general; I will, for a solemn fact."

"Half an hour had passed in silence when he suddenly exclaimed:

"There, by hornits! Captain Kale has succeeded in halting the brig and two boats have been sent ashore."

"Then depend upon it, every effort will be made to overhaul us, Harry," said Long Beard, "and you in that English messenger's hands and I in Kale's, we would fare badly."

Suddenly the boom of a cannon came down the wind, and glancing back, the fugitives saw a cloud of smoke hanging upon the brig's prows.

Long Beard took the glass and brought it to bear upon the enemy. A cry burst from his lips.

"She has sighted us, and is giving chase! Now for liberty, an English prison, or death, Harry!" he exclaimed, a stern, desperate look kindling in his eyes, and his great form growing majestic with the firm resolutions that strung every nerve and inspired his soul.

The race now began in earnest between the little schooner and the brig-of-war. Silent and firm the giant woodman stood at the helm, while Happy Harry stood aft gazing away at the pursuing enemy with a kind of a vague fascination, at the same time humming softly to himself:

"My name was Captain Kidd,
When I sailed, when I sailed."

CHAPTER XV.

THE PLEIADES NIGHT-WATCH.

CAPTAIN ROBERT RANKIN could not forgive himself for having made known the secret, or rather giving up the dispatches, that led the fair little Tempy to brave the dangers of a long journey by land and water.

He walked the floor in feverish agony.

Margery endeavored to calm his emotions.

"Tempy is not in half the danger you are, Captain Rankin," she said, "and I pray you will not worry yourself into a fever over her departure. She is well acquainted with the lake, and I daresay will reach her destination in safety."

"Not before night, though."

"She will do well if she reaches it by tomorrow night."

"Well, I cannot rest easy until I know harm has not befallen that brave young girl who virtually saved my life. But, kind friend, how soon do you expect your friends in?"

"Not before evening. Father usually turns about sunset."

"Is your father a fisherman?"

"Simply a recluse," replied Margery, evasively. "He has a penchant for secluded places, hence the reason that we dwell here among the romantic Pleiades."

"And is this secluded life agreeable to you and your sister, Tempy?"

"We love our father, and are contented wherever he is happiest."

Around this lonely island cabin and its lovely inmates there hung a mystery to Captain Rankin. He would have had it solved, for already he had become deeply interested in the family's history. He did not hesitate to admit that he had fallen desperately in love with the fair Tempy, although he tried, at first, to convince himself that it was but a momentary infatuation, and that the women might be the children of some old outcast hiding there, away from the hounds of the law. But his better judgment would assert itself, and the exalted innocence and honor that surrounded the women stoned confessed.

Margery extended every kindness in her power to alleviate the suffering of her guest, and in her gentle administrations there was a power as of magic. To him, she and Tempy had been good Samaritans—Sisters of Mercy—reserved in nothing that makes woman noble, gentle, loved and companionable.

The hours dragged wearily along to Rankin. He watched the sun changing in the doorway, and at times it seemed as though an hour made no difference in the position of the light and shadow. But, despite his impatience, the sun was gradually sinking westward, and finally dropped behind the tree tops. Then the twilight shadows began to gather in the cabin. A light breeze, sweetened with the perfume of wild flowers, stirred the green drapery of the trees. Away out along the margin of the island a bull-frog sent forth his harsh, rasping croak while a solitary cricket chirruped shrilly under the door-step, its ungrateful music harmonizing with the gathering gloom and depressing solitude.

Margery sat down at the open window, and gazing out over the lake, hummed a low, plaintive tune to herself. Her thoughts were far away; she was soon in deep meditation.

Meanwhile Rankin's thoughts turned upon his own situation. The silence and shadows filled him with vague forebodings.

Both were suddenly startled by the boom of a cannon breaking upon the silence. It rolled down from the north with a stunning shock.

"Oh, my God!" cried Margery, and she sprang to her feet and ran out of the cabin.

Rankin rose and followed her, tottering almost as he went.

From a point where they could obtain a partial view of the twilight-enshrouded lake, they beheld two sails. One of them, a little schooner, was already within a few rods of the island. The other, a brig carrying the English colors, and a gun fore and aft, stood on the northern extremity of the group of islands, over a mile away. It had evidently been anchored there, for all sails had been lowered.

"That is father's sail approaching there," exclaimed Margery, in delight.

"Do you know that other one off north?" asked Rankin.

"I do not; it's a stranger. Father will know, perhaps."

The little schooner soon turned into the shore. A tall man, with a long, snowy beard, stepped ashore, followed by a boy and a large dog. It was Long Beard, Harry and his dog.

Long Beard, then, was Margery's father.

Having secured his little craft by means of

a heavy rope, he turned and proceeded with the boy and his dog toward the cabin, to be met by Margery and Rankin.

Before a word of greeting had passed between the father and daughter, Harry shouted, as his eyes fell upon Captain Rankin:

"Hurrah for glory! hoppin' hornits! there he is, general; the very identik chap that war in the big fight with us on the raft."

"Yes, I am the man, my good fellow," responded Rankin, extending his hand toward the youth. "I remember you very well, my brave and peerless youth. The last I saw of you was during the fight on that trap of a raft."

"I have a distinct remembrance of that raft, captain, and a little unpleasantsness we had on it. That were a gory old fight; it was, for a stubborn fact."

"Yes, and I have wondered a hundred times how you and Mucklewee came out of the fight."

"Mucklewee!" exclaimed Harry, indignantly; "darn his hide! he got off with a basted head, I'm sorry to say."

"You speak severely of my guide, Harry."

"Your guide?" the youth replied, with disdain. "Captain, didn't you know that he war a traitor?"

"I did not, Harry."

"It's a holy fact, captain; it war him that got you into a confounded muss with the redskins. He is a British emissary."

Rankin was confounded by this intelligence, and but for the sober look on Harry's face would have disputed his word. He hurriedly connected different events that had occurred since he and Mucklewee had been together, and out of the links thus collected he gathered sufficient material to construct a chain of strong evidence corroborating Harry's story.

Meanwhile Margery and her father had stepped aside, when the former at once informed her parent of what had been going on since his departure. The giant seemed deeply affected by the news of Tempy's departure; at the same time, however, he expressed his approval of her going forth on a journey of such importance to their country.

"But at the same time she may be in less danger than we are in," he said, in concluding his remarks on that subject, and introducing another.

"Why so, father? Does that sail off to the north menace our safety?"

"It certainly does; it is an English brig-of-war, and has chased us since one o'clock, several times firing upon us."

"How does it come that English war-vessels are on this lake, father?"

"Why, Margery, war has been fully inaugurated, and the armies are moving. Hull has relinquished the conquest of Maldon, and retreated on Fort Detroit. The English are already across the frontier; but our greatest danger, Margery, does not come from that source"—he spoke in a low tone. "Night before last I was a prisoner in the stronghold of a company of British soldiers under command of none other than Captain Kale, *alias* Sir Eugene Nealmurphy."

"Oh, God of mercy!" cried Margery, clasping her brow, while her face turned ghostly pale and her form reeled as if about to fall. Her father drew her arm in his to support her, and then narrated the story of his capture by Kirby Kale, and his release by Happy Harry.

Finally matters were explained all around, when Long Beard led the way to the cabin. He introduced Harry to Margery and his scolded home.

The youth was welcomed by Margery in words that filled his young heart with joy. He had never before received such praise and thanks as Margery bestowed upon him. He felt that he was indeed a hero.

Margery soon had an ample supper prepared for all, when Harry and Rankin were invited to the board. The Wild Boy and his host did justice to the meal, for they had fasted since morning.

Before night had closed in Long Beard made certain of the brig-of-war's position. He found it was still standing off, north of the Pleiades. But he knew that the enemy would not remain idle during the night—that they would, in all probability, send out a boat to reconnoiter and scout among the islands. To defeat the success of such an expedition was the main object with the giant, for if his cabin was discovered, he knew its destruction would be inevitable.

Happy Harry, ever ready for adventure, volunteered to keep on the move with his dog during the night, venturing the assertion that no boat could approach undiscovered.

The night was dark—extremely dark, the sky being overcast with a heavy, gray mist. Everything was as still as though the heavy gloom subdued the very pulses of the air.

Like two shadows, Harry and his dog crept through the undergrowth that skirted the margin of the little green-clad islands; like shadows they stole along the beach. Now and then they stopped to listen—the master with his hand upon his dog's head. The animal's hearing was most acute; did he detect a suspicious sound, a toss of the head, or a low whine would announce the fact to his master.

Thus for hours they continued their watch around the island. Harry was growing drowsy and careless for the want of excitement when his attention was suddenly attracted by the surging of the waves along the bank.

"There's no wind to make them waves," the youth reasoned with himself, "and what's makin' them tickle the shore is more'n I can tell, 'less that's sunthin' in the strait between the two islands. If it wasn't so wickedly dark a feller and his dog might see sunthin' there. Oh, great hornits! Bell, I hope notthin' will befall these folks here. That poor woman looks sad enough anyhow, and then the old general's takin' on so 'bout his vther gal that's gone to Laketown. Gracious! if we ever git through this bald headed darkness alive, I'll strike out after that little gal of his'n. And we'll find her, too, or expand a blood-vessel in the attempt. Shh!—harkee, 'Shaz—ar!—jiggeder if there isn't—if there doesn't come a canoe creeping through the darkness like a spell of death! And now who is it—and whar are they goin'? Dog their riggins, they've got muffled oars, and that means deviltry the world over. They're a pisen pack from the brig. They're Englishers come down here to reconnoiter, and I'll be confounded if I know whether to git 'em over here and exterminate 'em, or fire into 'em and let 'em slide. But then I guess I'll do neither one; I'll trick 'em, and so saying, he called out:

"Boat ahoy!"

The voice seemed to come from the opposite island, six rods or more away.

"Ay! ay!" was the response from the barge.

"Who goes there?" demanded the voice on the island.

The crash of half a dozen muskets was the response. A groan issued from the island.

The boat turned in toward the shore, and Harry laughed to himself.

"Guess we laid him out," he heard one of the unknown boatmen say.

Quicker than we can record the fact, Happy Harry had stripped off his clothing, and, with his knife between his teeth, entered the water and struck out directly toward the enemy's boat. Belsazar at his side, both swam in silence.

The boat, a six-oared barge, belonging to the brig-of-war, reached the bank, when all the occupants but one landed and went to searching the undergrowth for the body of their supposed victim. The one left to watch the boat remained seated within it. His musket was leaning against the side. The oars hung loose in the rowlocks. The stillness was unbroken save by the noise made by the men among the rustling bushes.

Thus several moments passed; then a tiny wave broke again against the side of the boat and chased the bank. The soldier noticed it. Instinctive precaution made him a good soldier. He recognized, in an instant, the fact that there was no air to stir a ripple on the lake, and very naturally concluded that the water had been disturbed by something in it. He bent his head and listened; he heard the very faintest noise like that which is made by the breast of a small animal cleaving the waters as it glides along. He peered into the deep, dark night around him, and upon the bosom of the water; not two feet from the side of the canoe, he imagined he saw a round, spherical object resting upon the waves. Mechanically he put out his hand toward it, when to his horror he felt a pair of sharp fangs close a vise upon it.

A cry of horrible agony escaped the man's lips, but Belsazar held on to his hand, while Happy Harry, springing up into the boat, pitched the man overboard.

The youth was instantly warned of other dangers by the hasty approach of the men on shore. Seizing an oar he pushed the boat out upon the bosom of the night-enshrouded waters. His dog followed him. The unfortunate soldier swam ashore and briefly as possible told the story of his mishap.

Then the party discovered that they had been entrapped—at least enticed ashore upon an island from whence they could not escape.

The soldiers heard the boat with the unknown enemy retreating, and discharged their muskets in the direction of the sound, but in the darkness they shot at random and Harry escaped untouched.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE BESIEGED CABIN.

HAPPY HARRY having crossed the channel and made fast his boat, hurried to the cabin of Long Beard and reported his adventure.

The giant at once became very uneasy, for should the enemy discover his location escape would be impossible.

"I must get away from here," he said. "It will be death—yea! more than death to me and my children, should we fall into the power of the English. We must escape under cover of this night. I will move our effects most from the house and place them on board the schooner and then we will embark for some southern port."

"I am afraid, friend Long Beard," remarked Rankin, "that if you once get away from these islands the frigate will run you down. Perhaps we could dodge the enemy now, at least until your daughter Tempy returns from the post. Of course, Colonel Miller will give her a strong escort, and this assistance will enable us to get off."

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beyond Old Barrens Cottage for her beauty, and goodness, and gentleness, and all the other qualities that make some women a little lower than the angels. But no one thought that on a heart of flint like his—or, rather, no heart at all—the Venus de Medicis herself, should she step out alive from her pedestal, could make the slightest impression; and therefore, though our Erminie was every bit as good-looking as that scantily-draped lady of whom the world raves, though she had grown to be another Helen for whom another Troy might have been lost, no one set his visits to the cottage down to her, but rather to eccentricity, to some scheme, to some inexplicable notion, to any thing at all but to the real cause.

And so Judge Lawless was in love, and unsuspected. And as he sat there in his library, with his head in his hand, thinking, and pondering, and revolving, and wondering, on the best method of bringing matters to a crisis, and astonishing his friends, his intention was to raise Miss Germaine to the dignity of his wife. Judge Lawless was severely moral; but how to propose—that was the trying horn of the dilemma. Judge Lawless was not accustomed to proposing; he had not attempted it for the last five-and-twenty years, and then the lady had saved him the trouble. Mrs. Lawless had been a wild young heiress, who fell violently in love with the “sweet” curling hair and “divine” whiskers of the handsome young lawyer, and not being troubled with that disagreeable disease incident to most very young ladies, except bashfulness, had, like a girl of honor, come to the point at once, and in a very composed, upright, and downright way, tendered him her hand and fortune. The ambitious young lawyer, nothing loth, took her at her word, and, one fine moonlight night, a fourth-story window was opened, a rope-ladder put in requisition; then a carriage; then a parson; then a ring, and “Adolphus Lawless, barrister at law,” as his shingle then announced him, was wood and won.

But this was quite another thing. He was in love now, which he hadn’t been the first time; and love makes the boldest warrior that ever clove helmets and heads in battle as timid as a—I was going to say girl; but I won’t, for in such a case, they are not timid at all—but as a newly-fledged gosling. Not that he feared a refusal. Judge Lawless drew himself up until his pantaloons-straps cracked, and looked indignantly in the glass at himself for entertaining such an idea an instant. But he didn’t know the formula—that was it! Things had changed so since he was a *garçon*; and the manner of popping the question might have changed with the rest. It would never do to make himself ridiculous; though, as the thought crossed his mind, he drew himself up again to the full extent of his six feet, odd inches, and felt indignant at the notion of his being ridiculous under any circumstances whatever.

“Have her I must, come what will!” he said, getting up again, and resuming his 2:40 pace up and down the floor. “I am mad about that girl, I believe. The world may laugh and sneer at the idea of my marrying a—well, a pauper, in point of fact, when I could win, if I chose, the highest in the land. Well, let them. If Judge Lawless cannot do as he pleases, I should like to know who can. I have wealth enough to do us both; the old admiral will leave his estate and bank-stock to Ranty and Pet, and, b’nm-m’ah!—Yes, have her I must—that’s settled. And this very afternoon shall I ride over, and let her know the honor in store for her!”

And that very afternoon, true to his promise, Judge Lawless, arrayed in a somber, dignified suit of black, with his hair and whiskers oiled and scented to that extent that his fast mare, Wildfire, lifted up her head and looked at him in grave astonishment, and inwardly resolved to keep a wary eye on her master for the future, lest he should take to dandyism in his old age, made his way to Old Barrens Cottage.

Arriving at the cottage, he fastened his mare, and rapped at the cottage-door with his riding-whip, in a grand and important sort of way befitting the occasion. Erminie herself opened it; and, at sight of her beautiful, rounded form, the taper waist, the swelling bust, the white, rounded throat, on which the graceful little head was poised with the queenly air of a royal princess; the waving, sunshiny hair, the smiling lips, the soft, tender, violet eyes, Judge Lawless was twice, and thrice, as deeply, and irretrievably, and desperately in love as ever.

He came in. Erminie was alone. How he thanked the gods for that! took a seat, stood his cane in the corner, laid his hat on the table, drew out a snowy cambric handkerchief, redolent of musk, *eau de cologne*, otter of roses, and bergamot, from one of those intensely mysterious pockets gentlemen, for some inscrutable reason, wear in their coat-tails, blew his nose, replaced his handkerchief, laid a hand on each knee, looked at Erminie, and prepared her for what was coming by a loud “ahem!”

Erminie, whose rosy fingers were flying, as by stress, on some article of dress, did not look up; so all these significant preparations, proper to be done, and which are always done, I believe, whenever elderly men go to propose, were quite thrown away upon her.

“Ahem!” repeated the judge, with some severity, and yet looking with longing eyes at the graceful form and sweet, drooping face before him. “Miss Erminie!”

“Ahem!” The stately judge was rather embarrassed. “Perhaps, Miss Germaine, you are not in utter ignorance of—ahem!—of the object of my visits here. I have resolved the matter over in all its bearings, and have come to the conclusion that—ahem!—that I am at perfect liberty to please myself in this matter. The world may wonder—no doubt it will; but I trust I have wisdom enough to direct my own actions; and though it may stare, it cannot but admire the person I—ahem!—I have chosen!”

The judge made a dead halt, drew out his handkerchief again, until the air would have reminded you of “Ceylon’s spicy breezes,” and shifted his left leg over his right, and then his right one over his left. Erminie, not understanding one word of this valetudinary, had dropped her work, and sat looking at him, with wide-open eyes.

“In short, therefore, Miss Germaine, we will, if you please, consider the matter settled; and you will greatly oblige me by naming the earliest possible day for the ceremony.”

“The ceremony! What ceremony, sir?” said the puzzled Erminie, looking prettier than ever in her perplexity.

“Why, our marriage, to be sure!”

“Our marriage?”

“Certainly, my love. The earlier the day, the sooner my happiness will be complete!”

And the judge raised her hand to his lips, with the stately formality of five-and-twenty years before, fearing to venture any further; for there was a look in the sweet, wondering eyes that made him rather uneasy.

CHAPTER XXIX.

MR. TOOSYPEGS IN DISTRESS AGAIN.

“Pah! the I’ve been doing,

Watching and purring,

The light that lies in woman’s eyes,

Has been my heart’s undoing.

Though wisdom oft has sought me,

I scorned the love she brought me;

My only books were woman’s looks,

And folly’s all they’ve taught me—Moores.

ADMIRAL HARRY HAVENFUL sat alone in the parlor of the White Squall, the heels of his boots elevated on the knobs of the an-irons, his chair tipped back to that sublime

“Judge Lawless, excuse me. I do not know what you mean. I fear I have misunderstood you,” said Erminie, more perplexed than she ever was before in the whole course of her life.

“Misunderstood me? Impossible, Miss Germaine! I have used the plainest language, I think, in asking you to be my wife.”

“Your wife?”

“Yes, my wife! Why this surprise, dear girl? Why, Erminie! Good heavens, Erminie! is it possible you really have not understood me all this time? Why, dearest, fairest girl, I love you—I wish you to be my wife! Do you understand now?”

He would have passed his arm around her waist; but, crimson with burning blushes, she sprung to her feet, a vivid light in her beautiful eyes, and raised her hand to wave him off.

“You are mocking me, Judge Lawless! If you have had your amusement, we will drop the subject.”

“Mocking you, my beautiful Erminie! I swear to you I love you with all my heart and soul! Only make me happy, by saying you will be my wife!”

The conviction that he was really serious, now for the first time dawned upon Erminie’s mind. The rosy tide flooded neck and brow again, and she dropped her flushed face in her hands, as she remembered he was, Ranty’s father.

“I am not surprised that you should wonder at my choice,” said the judge, complacently. “Of course the world expects I should marry a woman of rank; but I like you, and am determined to please myself, let them say what they will!”

Erminie’s hands, dropped from her face, crimson now, but not with embarrassment; her eyes flashed with the fiery spirit of the old De Courcys, as she drew herself up to her full height, and calmly said:

“I will spare you the humiliation, and your friends the trouble of wondering at your choice. For the honor you have done me, I thank you, even while I must decline it.”

“Decline it?” The judge sat asthast.

Erminie compressed her lips, and silently bowed. She stood there like a young queen, her proud little head erect, her fair cheeks scarlet, her eyes darkening and darkening, until they seemed almost black.

“Done it!” The judge, in his amazement, was a sight to see.

“Yes, sir.”

“Miss Germaine, I—I’m thunderstruck! I—I’m confounded! I—I am utterly confounded! Miss Germaine, you do not mean it; you can’t mean it! it’s impossible you can mean it! Refuse me! Oh, it is utterly impossible you can mean it!”

“On the contrary, wonderful as it seems, I must distinctly and unequivocally decline the honor.” And Erminie’s look of calm determination showed her resolution was not to be shaken. Judge Lawless rose to his feet and confronted her. Indignation, humiliation, anger, wounded pride, mortification, jealousy, and a dozen other disagreeable feelings, flushing his face until its reflection fairly imparted a rosy hue to his snow-white shirt bosom.

“Miss Germaine, am I to understand that you refuse to marry me?”

“Decidedly, sir.”

“May I ask your reason for this refusal, Miss Germaine?”

“I recognize no right by which you are privileged to question me, Judge Lawless, but because of the respect I owe you so much my senior, I will say that, first, I do not love you; second, even if I did, I would not marry one who looks up to me as so far beneath him; and third—” She paused, caught his eye fixed upon her, and colored more vividly than before.

“Well, Miss Germaine, and third,” he said, sarcastically.

“I will answer no more such questions, Judge Lawless,” she said, with proud indignation; “and I repeat it once again; I cannot be your wife.”

“That remains to be seen, Miss Germaine. There are more ways than one of winning a lady; I have tried one, and failed; now I shall have recourse to another.”

“Judge Lawless, is that meant as a threat?” said Erminie, her proud De Courcy blood flushing in her cheeks and lighting up her eyes again.

He smiled slightly, but made no other reply, as he took his hat and cane and prepared to go.

“Once again, Miss Erminie, before I go, I ask you if your mind is fully made up to receive me?”

The darkening, streaming light of the violet eyes fixed full upon him was his only answer, as she stood drawn up to her full height.

“Good-morning, then,” he said, with a courteous smile. “I do not despair, even yet. Time works wonders, you know, Miss Germaine. Give my best regards to your excellent grandmother.” And with a stately bow, a la Grandison, the judge left the cottage, and the light of the dark, indignant, beautiful eyes.

But once on his horse, and galloping like the wind over the heath, a change wonderful to see came over the bland face of the judge. Dark and darker it grew, thicker and thicker was his scowl, angrier and angrier became his eyes, until his face looked like a human thunder-cloud.

“The proud, conceited, impudent minx!” he burst out, “to refuse me—me,—me, Judge Lawless. Why, she must be mad! By heaven! she shall be mine yet, if only to teach her a lesson. Black Bart is in Judgetown. I saw him yesterday; and he, with his fellow-smugglers, or pirates, or freebooters, or whatever they are, shall aid me in this. It does not sound well, to be sure, for a judge of the land to tacitly favor smuggling, but then those contraband wines and brandies would tempt St. Peter himself. They shall do a different kind of smuggling for me this time. In the Hidden Cave Madame Erminie will be safe enough, and that queen of the smugglers, or whatever she is, can take care of her. Refuse me! by the hosts above, that girl shall repent her temerity! This very day I will see Black Bart, and then—”

He compressed his lips tight, and his face assumed a look of dark, grim determination, that showed his resolution was unalterable.

And meanwhile Erminie, with her fair face bowed in her hands, was weeping the bitterest tears she had ever shed in her life.

“Now, Orlando,” repeated the admiral, with a wave of his pipe—“now, Orlando, the question is, what’s to pay?”

“Admiral Havenful,” said Mr. Toosypegs, in terror, “there ain’t nothing to pay; I don’t owe a cent in the world, s’elp me Bob! I don’t owe a single blamed brass farthing to a child unborn!”

“Pah!” said the admiral, with a look of intense disgust at his obtuseness. “I didn’t mean that. I want to know what’s up, where the wind sits; what you keep cruising off and on that cottage for all the time. Now, then, what’s to pay?”

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“It’s my intention to hold hard, Admiral Havenful,” replied Mr. Toosypegs, blushing like a beet-root. “But I’d rather not mention what takes me there, if it’s all the same to you. It’s a secret, locked deep in the unfathomable

angle which women admire, but men only understand. A long meerschaum, with an amber mouth-piece, protruded from his lips while whiffs of blue, vapory smoke curled from the corner of his mouth; his hands stuck in his trousers pockets, and his eyes fixed admiringly on the pink and yellow ship-of-war on the mantel. Admiral Harry Havenful was an inspired life hugely on a small scale, when a dispirited knock, such as moneyless debtors give, was heard at the outer door.

“Tumble up, below there! tumble up, aho-y-y-y!” roared the admiral, taking the pipe from his mouth to summon the servants.

In compliance with this zephyr-like request,

and on opening the door, Mr. O. C. Toosypegs stalked in, and with the head of his cane in his mouth, entered the parlor and presented

recesses of this here bosom; and I never mean to reveal it to anybody till I’m a melancholy corpse in the skies. You’ll excuse me, Admiral Havenful; a fellow can’t always restrain his tears, you know; and I feel so miserable, thank you, of late, that it’s a consolation even to cry,” said Mr. Toosypegs, wiping his eye.

“Now, Orlando, you just hold on a minute—will you?” said the admiral, facing briskly round, with much the same air as an unfeeling dentist who determines to have your tooth out whether you will or not; “now, look here, and let’s do things ship-shape. Has our Firefly got anything to do with it?”

“Admiral Havenful, I’m happy to say she

has not. I felt pretty badly about Miss Pet, there, one time; but I have got nicely over that. It wasn’t near so dangerous as I expected it would be; but this—is. The way I feel sometimes, Admiral Havenful, is awful to contemplate. I can’t sleep nor eat, and I don’t take no pleasure even in my new pantaloons with the blue stripes down the side. I often lie awake nights crying now, and I wish I had never been born! I do wish it!”

“Orlando Toosypegs,” said the admiral, rising, “just look here, will you? I’m not going to stand this sort of talk, you know—this flying in the face of Providence!”—here

the admiral raised his glazed hat, and looked reverently at a blue-blown fly on the ceiling—“because it’s not proper nor ship-shape, now—how you can fix it. Now, Orlando, I’ve advised you time and again—I’ve been father to you before you was the size of a tar-bucket—I’ve turned you up and spanked you when you wasn’t big as a well-grown marlin-spike, and I’ve often given you a good kicking when you were older, for your shortcomings; I’ve talked to you, Orlando Toosypegs, for your good till all was blue—I’ve made myself as horse as a boatswain splashing of good advice on you; and now what’s my return? You say you don’t see no use in being born. Orlando, it grieves me—it makes me feel as bad as if I had drank a pair of bilge-water; but there is no help for it! I give you up to ruin—I’ve lost all faith in human morals—I wash my hands of you altogether!”

Here the admiral looked around for some

water to literally fulfill his threat; but, seeing none, he wiped his hands on the table-cloth, and resumed his seat with the air a Spartan father may be supposed to have worn when condemning his own son to death.

So deeply affected was Mr. Toosypegs by this pathetic exhortation that he subbed away like a hyena in his fanning bandanna, with a great noise and much wiping of eyes and nose, which showed he was not lost to all sense of human feeling.

“Yes, Orlando!” said the admiral, mournful, “What now?”

“Admiral Havenful, would you be so good as not to say that? You mean well, I know, but you can’t imagine the unpleasant sensations it causes—ugh!” said Mr. Toosypegs, with a wry face and a shudder.

“Orlando Toosypegs,” said the admiral, rising, “just look here, will you? I’m not going to stand this sort of talk, you know—this flying in the face of Providence!”—here

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THE ONSET OF THE NORTH-WIND.

BY HENRI MONTGOMERY.

Blow the north-wind a ringing blast!
Down from their icy fastnesses
That guard the shores of the Polar seas,
Gathered his vassals thick and fast.
By rapid marches and forced advance
South and southward he made his way,
Fierce and cruel and swift to slay
With glittering halberd and pointed lance.
His loitering rear-guard, looking back,
Grimly smiled, rejoiced to see
The parished fragments of flower and tree
Scattered along the terrible track.
And where he saw, as he hurried past,
The covering fields lay bare and brown,
He sent his hurtling snow-storms down
To shut them close and hold them fast.
Armed in the short November days
He hurried along the tempests of the night;
And through each long December night
Still marches on, nor his onset stays.
Till at last he posts his sentinels wary,
Throws up his drifts for a quick defense,
And pitches his camp of snowy ice
On the helpless fields of January.
And so we sit in 'leaguered state;
Sit and muse by the open fire,
And pile the blazing back-log higher,
Waiting long, but content to wait,
Since we know full well a time will come
When out of the south triumphant spring,
With flower banners fluttering,
Will march to drive the usurper home.
And the welcome south-wind, coming then,
Shall put to flight the frost and snow,
Warm with its kiss the brook's cold flow,
And wake all nature to whisper low
"The beautiful spring-time is come again."

John's Christmas.

BY FREDERICK DEWEY.

STURDY John Duncan walked into his little cottage one morning very sore at heart. And no wonder: times had been hard with him ever since he had been married, nearly a year since. When he led the prettiest and most tender-hearted girl in Mayhew to the altar he was in the receipt of a good salary in the shop of the principal dealer in the town.

It was quite sufficient to get married on, people said; and Minnie would save a trifl, too. But the dealer proved to be a villain, and plunging heavily into useless debt, suddenly absconded, throwing John, three months after marriage, out of employment. Since then he had been working, now and then, on the neighboring farms and about the village. But in the latter he had no hopes of making a living—it was the dullest, snail plodding town in the State.

What he earned went as fast as it came, and now winter had superseded autumn, and he was in debt, and his pocket was literally empty. So as he entered his little house this wintry morning he felt discouraged and moody, and no wonder.

Pretty Minnie greeted him with a sweet smile, as bright and cheery as ever, though she instantly noted his despondency.

"Well, John?" said Minnie, with a smile.

"Nothing, as usual," he replied, gloomily. "No one needs any help. Great heavens! why did I drag you down to poverty and drudgery—you, the prettiest and most tenderly-reared girl in Mayhew! If I had only stood by my vow and had not married until I had something ahead that would not have been."

She ran to him, and, perching on his knee, kissed him tenderly.

"I should think you would be ashamed of yourself!" she declared, with a charming attempt at severity. "To think that you, a great, strong, good-for-nothing, dear old fellow, should be grumbling and brooding while I am satisfied. For my part, I wouldn't change places with the richest wife in the world." And she kissed him again.

Oh, the magical effect of a wife's pure love. He pressed her to his breast in silence, finally idolizing her. He thought, then, that however poor in worldly goods he might be; that however wasted in health or sickness, he had a jewel far above price—the pure love of a gentle, patient wife.

They sat together for some time, then the cloud returned to John's brow.

"Minnie," he said, gloomily, "what makes me feel so this morning is that Christmas is at hand, only two days off, and we haven't anything good for dinner!"

"Oh, never mind that, John. I am sure I can do without for once."

"But I can't. I have always been used to a Christmas dinner and if I go without day after to-morrow it will be for the first time."

In her secret heart Minnie might have said the same, but in her features nothing was visible save a cheery, loving smile.

"I am almost discouraged!" he said, watching the hopeful face close to his. "If it was alone it would be different."

"Hush!" she said, softly. "Think of what you are making, and be hopeful."

She blushed eloquently, and pointed to a corner of the small, bare room. A half-finished cradle, roughly constructed, stood by the wall. It was John's handiwork.

A tear stood in his eyes. He put her gently aside and strode toward the door. Stopping with his hand on the latch, he heartily said:

"Minnie, if there is any way in which I can make Christmas, at least, a cheerful day, I will try it. Good-by, my sweetheart."

The door closed quickly, and he was gone. Minnie crept to a closet and took from some hidden cranny some gay cloth, and, neatly sewing, with a smile toward the cradle; she was preparing for its completion.

John stood for a moment undecided, then strode away toward a large white house on a distant hill. He had heard there had been a change of occupants and that a wealthy old gentleman now resided there. Though still downcast, he hoped to find work there and walked rapidly on. He calculated his prospects in his mind as he walked, and, like every one else, took a sort of woe-begone pleasure in dwelling on his misfortunes.

"I owe the grocer twenty dollars; the butcher ten. (I wonder how long it is since we had fresh meat.) And there is the clothing I got for Minnie, (God bless her!) fifteen more. And the three months' rent at twelve dollars—oh, dear! I wish I had a job!"

He was quite close to the house when he heard a subdued lowing close by. He halted and listened. It seemed quite close, yet there was nothing in sight. Determining it was some animal in distress, he proceeded toward the sound. After going some distance the sound appeared to change its locality, for it seemed to come from behind him. Turning, he walked back, and when he came to the spot where he first heard it, he appeared to come from a shed close by.

John was puzzled, and was inclined to think some mischievous archon was deceiving him. He was on the point of continuing his walk when the sound once more came to his hearing. This time it was loud and round and certainly came from the vicinity of the shed.

He walked toward it. The sound became more distinct as he approached, and was certainly the low of a bovine. A few steps past the shed brought him to the cause of the noise.

He was standing on the brink of a partially filled-up well. In its flourishing days it had been nothing more than an ordinary "wallow," as being in a marsh water was found at an insignificant depth. Now, a few days before a slight rain had fallen, followed by sleet, which froze quickly afterward. When it was raining considerable water trickled down the sides of the well, and when frozen, made them very slippery.

In the bottom of this hole was a cow unable to get out, moaning mournfully. He remembered her as having belonged to the former owners of the farm, and probably she had been purchased by the successor.

Once sleek and plump, she was now lank and lean, and her ribs protruded plainly; she had evidently been there, and without food, for several days. Probably the water at the bottom (now skimmed by a slight ice) had drawn her thither and she had been unable to extricate herself from her unpleasant predicament. Her eyes fixed themselves on John with a pleading, and at the same time, a languishing expression, which, under other circumstances, would have been ludicrous.

John instantly comprehended the situation, and his ready wit immediately conceived a plan by which the hapless animal could be relieved. He went to the shed, and as he expected, found a sufficiency of detached and loose mould under its sheltering roof. A short board lay at hand. This he loaded with the soil, and, going to the hole, scattered it down the side. This operation he repeated until he was satisfied. Then he stood on the other side of the hole and drove the cow up his path, which she ascended easily. She was overjoyed at her release, and with a demonstrative below of mingled thanks and joy, she careered away.

"What are you doing, sir? I would like to know, sir! yes, sir!" came in a quavering, piping voice, from the shed.

John turned and beheld a tall, spare gentleman, with a superabundance of fur and wrappers, standing close by, watching him curiously. He was aged and rather cross. John thought, on a cold morning. He was the new owner of the farm. He resolved to conciliate him if possible.

"One of your cows, sir, got into that hole and couldn't get out again, so I helped her."

"You did, eh? and did you know, were you aware, that she belongs to me?"

"I supposed she did, sir."

"And suppose I put her in there, sir! what right had you to take her out, sir?"

"I do not think you put her in there."

"Why don't you?" (curiously).

"Because you don't look like a man that would cause even a beast to undergo misery."

"Young man, what is your name?"

"John Duncan."

"Oho! so you are young Duncan. You are pretty poor, ain't you?"

John's face flushed, and he glared at the old gentleman.

"Come, come! I beg your pardon, young man. I am an old ruffian," and he laid his hand kindly on John's arm. The austere expression gave place to a kindly, sympathizing one; and the younger man's passion vanished.

"Yes, I am poor—very poor. And, sir, I've got a little wife at home whom I care for. To-day is the 23d, and I haven't a penny to get her a titbit for a Christmas dinner. If you could give me a job—"

"Lord bless my soul!" hastily interrupted the old gentleman. "Yes, yes; I know all about it. Often heard of you—very deserving young person—was just a-going to your house after you—kind-hearted chap to help a dumb beast. Yes, yes; come on!"

He hobbled away toward his residence, continually commanding John to follow him, and indulging in a variety of strange and disjointed sentences, among which frequently occurred the mention of his kindness to a dumb beast. Past the stately, comfortable residence he hurried, never deviating a jot from his course. Through the maze of wicker fences which guarded the lawn and garden; dodging through the occupants of the barnyard, and into the plethoric barn. Here he stopped short, and taking a pitchfork from a dumb beast. Yes, yes; come on!"

He looked passing fair in her sweet, half-bride-like, half-matronly dignity, her pale, refined face lighted with such beaming radiance, her dark, glowing eyes wearing a perfect happiness in their brave, proud glances.

Everything was so pleasant to her; her charming little home, over which she presided with a quiet grace that could not have been equalled by a duchess in her castle. Frank had been so lavish of all the little dainties and luxuries that suited her fine nature so well; and as she looked around her little parlor, as neat as hands could render it, and bearing in every detail, from the position of the gay Persian ottomans, to the hanging-baskets between the gracefully-draped lace curtains, the impress of a woman's artistic touch, Ethel's heart gave great bounds of rapture as light as she thought Frank had done it all—Frank, her lover, her husband, her lord and master.

This afternoon she was expecting a letter, without doubt. Her husband had been at Tanglewood a week, and although he had sent no word as yet, Ethel had found a thousand excuses for his tardiness. Until to-day: just a week from the day of his departure, when she certainly did look for her letter.

The thought had but gossamer wings to the hours of that bright sunshiny day. She had risen early and taken her customary walk before she prepared her lonely, tasty breakfast; after which she had put her house in exquisite order, and then sat down to her music for a long practice.

There were many new songs—Danks, Millard's, and others, that Frank seemed to have ordered with an especial admiration for the subject discussed in them all—love; and Ethel sung them in her sweet, pure voice, with an earnestness that made her cheeks glow.

As yet, she had not allowed herself to be lonesome, and not once had she permitted herself to recall the reproach she had felt the day her husband had gone away, leaving her at home.

She was very happy, because of perfect trust and content, and in her trust and content she stood in the lace-draped bay window watching the little children at play, and waiting for the approach of the letter-carrier, whose gray uniform was already distinguishable a block off, as with his satchel slung over his shoulder, and a pile of letters in his hand, he called at house after house, nearing her at every call. She was very impatient, in her own dainty way, that she manifested by quick tapping of her slipped foot, and by the light and eagerness that leaped to her wistful eyes. It seemed he would never reach her door—and she in such delicious unrest to get the letter from his hands that little knew the preciousness of the burden they carried so carelessly.

couple listened attentively. When they arose from dinner the old gentleman said:

"Young man, when I met you this morning I was on my way to demand my rent, for I own your house now. I was crusty and sour, and might have treated you harshly." He never could have done it in the world. "But when I saw you maneuver about the poor beast I saw you were smart and kind-hearted. Now, do you know what I've got?"

They eyed him askance.

"I have got the biggest farm in the State. I am a mighty rich man. Now, I want a bookkeeper and a supervisor. You'll do to a charm. I'll give you one hundred a month and expenses—if I don't I am a ruffian. I want you to go to work right after Christmas, and I'll pay your first month's salary in advance—right here, this minute." He pulled out his huge pocket-book and handed bills and coin to John.

"There, there, now," whispered the good wife, drawing Minnie to her. "Don't take on so—you mustn't; there's a dear."

She was sobbing for joy. The good dame cried, too. The old gentleman blew his nose violently, and sharply scolded Joe for putting such green wood on the fire. It was enough to ruin younger eyes than his, he declared, with his back to the rest.

After supper that night, John finished the cradle. Then he took his wife in his arms, and clasped her long and lovingly. She wept on so.

"When the little one lies here," he said, softly, tapping the cradle, "we need not pinch and toll so hard, my darling. We will be comfortable then. God bless the old gentleman."

"God bless them both; and you, too, my tender-hearted John."

DAWN OF DAY.

BY L. C. GREENWOOD.

The gray shadows that we earth in brooding lay
Throughout the silent night, and covering
With freshness all below, are hovering
Before their vanishing at the dawn of day.

The trembling dewdrops on every flower and tree
Are made translucent with the opal hue
Of the sunbeams that pierce the shadows
through;

Awakening both bird and honey-seeking bee.

The sky with rosy smile serenely bending
Above the stretching landscape's magic view;

Such as on canvas artist never drew—
With golden light through trembling haze descending.

The half-closed flowers like eyes entranced in
sleeping;

Are slowly opening to Aurora's tinted light,
Re-freshed by dew—as eyes by sleep of night;

Drinking the pearls to their roots creeping.

Oh, that the day may end in rich completeness,
Which now is dawning on this world for all;

And the duties that to each one may fall
Be done so perfect, adding to life's sweetnes.

May our lives be blended with a purity.

That when at resurrection's glorious morn
The shrouding shadows from this life are torn,
On us shall dawn Heaven's bright futurity.

The cool summer afternoon was nearly over, and already fresh, lively breezes were blowing refreshingly, even in New York, where the day had been remarkably pleasant and invigorating. Up in Harlem, the little children, freshly bathed and dressed in their white, cool suits, were playing in the different door-yards, and Ethel Havelstock, her own pleasant duties completed, and herself dressed in a newly-laundred blue lawn, stood in the side bay-window of her house, watching the frolic of the children, and laughing with them, in the fullness of the joy in her heart.

She looked passing fair in her sweet, half-bride-like, half-matronly dignity, her pale, refined face lighted with such beaming radiance, her dark, glowing eyes wearing a perfect happiness in their brave, proud glances.

Everything was so pleasant to her; her charming little home, over which she presided with a quiet grace that could not have been equalled by a duchess in her castle. Frank had been so lavish of all the little dainties and luxuries that suited her fine nature so well; and as she looked around her little parlor, as neat as hands could render it, and bearing in every detail, from the position of the gay Persian ottomans, to the hanging-baskets between the gracefully-draped lace curtains, the impress of a woman's artistic touch, Ethel's heart gave great bounds of rapture as light as she thought Frank had done it all—Frank, her lover, her husband, her lord and master.

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The thought had but gossamer wings to the hours of that bright sunshiny day. She had risen early and taken her customary walk before she prepared her lonely, tasty breakfast; after which she had put her house in exquisite order, and then sat down to her music for a long practice.

There were many new songs—Danks, Millard's, and others, that Frank seemed to have ordered with an especial admiration for the subject discussed in them all—love; and Ethel sung them in her sweet, pure voice, with an earnestness that made her cheeks glow.

As yet, she had not allowed herself to be lonesome, and not once had she permitted herself to recall the reproach she had felt the day her husband had gone away, leaving her at home.

She was very happy, because of perfect trust and content, and in her trust and content she stood in the lace-draped bay window watching the little children at play, and waiting for the approach of the letter-carrier, whose gray uniform was already distinguishable a block off, as with his satchel slung over his shoulder, and a pile of letters in his hand, he called at house after house, nearing her at every call. She was very impatient, in her own dainty way, that she manifested by quick tapping of her slipped foot, and by the light and eagerness that leaped to her wistful eyes. It seemed he would never reach her door—and she in such delicious unrest to get the letter from his hands that little knew the preciousness of the burden they carried so carelessly.

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Ethel good-by, in a gravely cheerful way, and left her to her sorrow—the lone girl, who had not a breast in the wide world to weep on; between whom and the dismal future no arm was extended.

CHAPTER XXI.

A CONFERENCE ON THE WAY.

As the door closed behind Carleton Vincy—the door of the house to which he had brought such utter desolation, a smile of positive relief crossed his face. He lifted his hat, and wiped the big drops of sweat from his forehead with the manner of a man who has successfully made a tremendous effort.

He walked rapidly to the corner where he haled a car, and as he hurried further away every second, realized perfectly that he had accomplished his part of the business with wonderful ease and haste; that there was only left the delightfully congenial task of dealing with Georgia Lexington just as pleased him.

That ride was a memorable one to Carleton Vincy. One is never so much alone as when in a crowd, and he realized it to be so, as he saw none but strange faces around him, all the way down to the pier from which the boat left for Tanglewood. Somehow Ethel's face haunted him—so overflowing with anguish, so perfect in its pitiful bravery. Her wistful eyes were haunting him like ghosts—those beautiful eyes to which he had called tears that flowed until they drained the very fountain of grief. Was it because his vile touch had unsealed that spring of tears, because even his callous conscience thrrobbed under her womanly honor and mingled sorrow and courage, or, was there some other reason, whose very inexplicability puzzled him, that would not let him banish her from his thoughts?

Even now and alone his gloating delight that Georgia was still more surely in his power on account of his alliance with Havelstock whom he knew was a potent friend, was the memory of the girl's face, the sweet gravity of her manner, the tender dignity with which she refused his assistance.

So he rode along, his hat drawn over his eyes, his hands thrust in his pockets—this man whom people had heard of as dead and buried years ago, whom people had forgotten even the memory of—this fiend incarnate, whose sole mission in life was to torment and make bitter as wormwood the already bitter life of one fair woman.

At the slip, Vincy left the car, and went directly aboard the boat, that was just with drawing her gang-plank as he stepped on deck—to meet Frank Havelstock, leaning lazily over the guards smoking a cigar with as keen a relish as though he had not been waiting for his agent in as deliberate and devilish a sin as man ever concocted or committed.

"Well—safely back?"

Havelstock put the significant question, looking Vincy keenly in the face.

"Safely back!"—an answer slightly emphasized, and fully as significant. It conveyed the whole story, and none of a dozen bystanders who heard it would have guessed all those few, apparently careless words implied.

Havelstock took out his cigar-case—a dainty, bronze velvet affair, with his monogram embroidered in brown silk upon it—the loving handiwork of Ethel, who had made it during the peaceful time when he was nearer goodness than he ever would be again; Vincy accepted a cigar, lighted it, and the two strolled leisurely through the boat, to the after deck, that was comparatively deserted.

They drew a couple of camp-stools near the guards, on which they sat themselves; the cool breezes blowing freshly over them, the lowering sun sending shanting red gleams over their heads—these two leaped in such unholly compact.

"And now—tell me all. What did she say—how did she take it?"

Havelstock knocked off a pile of foamy ashes as he put the question, whose very intent coldness, eager curiosity betrayed thoroughly the depraved nature he was so apt at hiding under the specious garb of his personal attraction, society-polish of manner, and an intelligence and aesthetic refinement that was all the more terrible because of the power it gave him to commit his wickedness.

"Well,"—said Vincy settled himself more comfortably against the network of the guard, and crossed his feet on the camp-stool in front of him—"she's a little brick. Upon my word, Frank, I never came so near making a fool of myself in all my life. Such eyes!—I can forgive you for forgetting everything else in the world."

Havelstock smiled serenely.

"Yes. Ethel's eyes are very handsome—they conquered me without any terms of mercy. Poor little girl! I know it half-killed her."

"It did that. For a moment, when I announced the awful news, I thought she was dying, standing straight up, too. I could see nothing but eyes—big, shiny fires, that seemed to me would scorch me through. I tell you I felt uneasy, Frank; that's a fact. I never saw anything like it, except once, when I struck Georgia's young one, to stop its squalling; I remember she gave me about such a look, that I've thought of since more than once."

"What did you tell her?—the story we agreed upon? And you showed her the newspaper accounts?"

"I told her in a very few well-chosen words the sad story of your death by drowning, and the fact of your interment at Greenwood. I showed her the *Herald*, *Tribune* and *Sun*, each of which contained the accounts I myself wrote, the discrepancies of which reports I explained on strictly scientific principles."

"And she never suspected anything by the slight differences of name?"

"Nothing—noting at all. Of course, there was the greatest difficulty in our way, as your real name in print would have alarmed your friends. Happily, that danger is tided over."

"And now for Ida Wynne, and half of the kingdom. By the by, you told her Tanglewood deplored my untimely demise?"

"Of course, although I have wondered since if that was a cautious move. I told her to keep her from going to the Lexingtons for further information. The fact of their being in mourning would deter her, you know. But it occurs to me later, will not the effect be contrariwise? will not Mrs. Havelstock return home because she will be nearer your relations—or from a romantic idea of living near where you were known last in the flesh?"

Havelstock's lips curled in a sneer.

"You are not so good a judge of character as I supposed you if you think for a moment that Ethel Maryl would stoop to such a measure. She will stand up for herself in joy or trouble, and never descend to return home, or ask the smallest favor at the hands of people. She would starve before she would do that or return to Mrs. Lawrence."

"There is one assurance you can rest in, and that is that she is fully competent to take care of herself. Have you any idea what she will do?"

Havelstock threw his cigar-stump into the

waves, and looked carefully after it before he replied.

"Frankly, I do not have the slightest idea. I know she could teach music, or sew, or take a position in a store in almost any capacity."

"It need not concern you. The bond is effectually severed between you, and the chances are that your paths in life will never run counter.

She will be a poor, struggling girl,

working hard for her own living, wearing her robes of black mockery; until, in time, she

eventually be comforted again; and you even your name lost in that of Lexington, the heir of the magnificent estate of Tanglewood, the husband of the rich and charming Miss Wynne, with your summers divided between Saratoga, Newport and your estate, and your winters between receptions, dinners, operas—is it in the bounds of probability that you will ever meet?"

There was a sarcastic pitifulness in Carleton Vincy's words and tone, as he drew the true picture of their two lives—Havelstock's and the innocent, wronged girl he had so wickedly deserted—that made Frank regard him with honest surprise.

"You are not yourself; has anything hap-

pened to sour your temper?"

Vincy laughed harshly.

"Nothing, I assure you. Only, I declare I can't forget those pitiful, tearful eyes."

"You're a fool, Vincy. If I, whom she

loved with an intensity you may imagine, can

throw her over without any particular qualms,

I think you might spare me any dramatic

conscientiousness."

There was a contemptuous severity in Havelstock's voice, and a cynical sneer in his eyes that effectually silenced Vincy, who, for ten thousand worlds, would not have lost Havelstock's powerful assistance regarding his affairs.

So he answered, prefacing his words with a half laugh:

"You're right, Havelstock; I am a fool;

but not the first who has been made so by a

woman's eyes."

A long, thoughtful silence fell on them.

Around them were many voices, gay laughter, and the innocent mirth of glad-hearted children. The diamond spray dashed against the sides of the steamboat; the peaceful green banks seemed gliding by, in a silent, phantom march; overhead the sky was one speckless arch of vivid blue, and as the evening gathered softly, slowly, and occasional lights twinkled from elegant residences along the river, it seemed as if the very hush of the sweet summer night thundered its disapproval on those two men's heads, as they hurried along, to forge other links in the chain of fate with which they should essay to bind their victims.

At the little dock near Tanglewood they found the Lexington carriage waiting. Frank jumped in, bidding Vincy a hearty good-night; while Vincy walked along toward the tavern, filled with bitter thoughts of Georgia, nestled amid all the luxury and pomp of Tanglewood—Georgia, his wife.

"Curses on her proud head, that I will bring to the very dust!"

He muttered the words as he glanced toward the spacious building, majestic in its massive splendor, that covered her threatened head.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 298.)

TO EVERYBODY.

BY FRANK DAVIES.

YOU ARE A FOOL

AND ALL THE WORLD IS FOOLISH

IT'S A FOOL'S LIFE

IT'S A FOOL'S DEATH

IT'S A FOOL'S FATE

IT'S A FOOL'S FORTUNE

IT'S A FOOL'S FUTURE

IT'S A FOOL'S FORTUNE

IT'S A FOOL'S FATE

DESPAIR NOT.
BY J. H. LEWIS.

Look up, man! look before thee!
But thou art thy cheerless lot.
A sturdy zephyr still helps o'er thee,
When thou dost expect the not.
Near thee are thy children playing,
Speaking in their childish prate,
While thy heart is for them praying,
They unconscious of their state.
Poets talk of human weakness,
E'eris is but mortal's part,
Ay, but still there's much of meekness,
Self-denial in the heart.
Man, thy babies shall be protected,
Shall a speedy aid be given
By the One who has selected
Such as they for heirs of heaven.
Why despond, then, if Luck fails thee?
Why not labor to o'ercome
Fierce Despair, that now assails thee,
Mocks thee in thy cheerless home!

Nick Whiffles' Pet:
NED HAZEL, THE BOY TRAPPER.

BY CAPT. J. F. C. ADAMS.

CHAPTER V.

GRIZZLY BEAR CAVERN.

FULL of eager hope, Ned Mackintosh left his friend, Nick Whiffles, and started toward the Blackfoot village, with the purpose of gaining one glimpse of Miona—she for whom he was willing to brave and to do so much.

Reaching the small creek to which reference has been made, he was not a little surprised to find an Indian canoe, lying against the bank at his feet.

"Now, if there is no owner near, I call that extremely fortunate," he muttered, as he furtively glanced about. "I can cross to the opposite side, and then, perhaps, when the red fellow comes back, he will think he forgot and left it there."

He gave one vigorous shove, and sprung in. The canoe moved about half-way across the creek, and began drifting downward, when Ned picked up the paddle; but, as he dipped it into the water, it occurred to him that the safer way would be for him to descend the creek to the river, and then steal along shore.

By this means he would avoid leaving the telltale trail that has proved fatal to so many similar enterprises. So keeping the boat in the center of the stream, he gently used the paddle, and glided easily down the current, reaching the river itself at the end of a few minutes.

Still hopeful and confident, he paddled along, keeping close to the shore, and was within a very short distance of the village, when he saw the prow of a large canoe, coming around a short bend in the river.

As quick as a flash the young man ran his boat under the shore, where the overhanging limbs looked dense enough to cover him, and with some apprehension awaited the coming and passing of this new danger.

He was not kept long in waiting. The measured dip of paddles came nearer and nearer, and when nearly opposite, the bushes in front of him were cleaved in twain by the prow of the other boat, and he was captured!

"What is the meaning of this?" he demanded, indignantly. "I came with the traders. This is dangerous to you!"

The last words were uttered in the Blackfoot tongue.

In doing so, Ned entirely forgot himself, and committed a blunder which he saw on the instant was fatal.

In the canoe, were both Woo-wol-na and Red Bear, and when they heard their own tongue used so well and forcibly, a dim suspicion of theirs at once became conviction.

The appearance of the young man with Nick Whiffles, during the early part of the day, caused both to suspect that he was the boy-lover of four years before, who had promised to return for Miona.

Still, the changes in his personal appearance were so great, that they could not dare to feel certain until they described him lurking in the vicinity of the village, and heard him use the tongue he had learned from his old friend Nick Whiffles.

Then, as has been shown, all doubt became certainty, and there was no hesitation as to what disposal should be made of him.

They could easily kill him, but there were some slight apprehensions that vengeance might be visited upon them if they did this, as the sharp eyes of Nick Whiffles would be apt to detect and report the crime, while he could be quietly carried to the rocks and dropped into Grizzly Bear Cave and left to die of starvation, without the slightest trace remaining to tell the tale of his fate.

Understanding that he had sealed his own doom, Mackintosh attempted no entreaty, resistance or threats. The baleful scowl and exultant looks of Red Bear, and his equally heartless father, told too plainly that all would be thrown away there.

Sad, unspeakably sad as it was, he had brought his own fate upon him.

Speeding swiftly down the river, they speedily passed the village, and then on for several miles, until they reached the bare, bare rocks, where the heaviest foot could leave not the slightest print to betray its passage.

Here the body of the despairing, wretched Ned Mackintosh was lifted from the canoe and carried across the rocks to the opening of the cavern.

This was irregular in shape and some four or five feet in diameter. Holding the captive for a moment, one of the Indians cut the thongs that bound his arms, so that his limbs were entirely free, and then let go!

Down through the dark, cold air of the cavern he whizzed, certain that his last moment was at hand, and that the next instant he would be a crushed, a shapeless mass at the bottom.

But, instead of striking the flinty rock, he splashed into chilling water, sinking down a dozen feet, when he came in contact with the cold stone, and sprang upward again.

As he rose to the surface, he looked about him, but could see nothing at all. Every thing was blank darkness, and only when he raised his eyes could he detect the round, jagged hole above him, through which the dim, fading light of day entered. Striking out, however, he took but a few strokes, when he came against an obstruction, climbing upon which he found himself upon a broad, flat rock, clear of the water.

"Saved from one death to die another a hundredfold more dreadful!" muttered the poor sufferer, as he seated himself upon the rock, and endeavored to think calmly upon his situation.

The night so rapidly deepened that when he

looked upward, it was impossible to discern the entrance to the cavern, while the gloom around him was absolutely impenetrable.

He did not dare to move from where he was sitting, lest he should stumble into some pitfall worse than the one from which he had just extricated himself, and so he prepared to spend the night where he was.

"There is no possibility of my escaping from here," he reflected, "or they would not have cast me in. Nothing but the intervention of Heaven, through Nick Whiffles, can save me."

"Will he suspect what has become of me? I promised to rejoin him by dusk, and it is past that time now. He will wait and search all the night and all to morrow, but there is no trail by which to guide him here. He is keen-witted, and so is Calamity, but what clue can they gain to my whereabouts?"

"Oh! if Miona could only know, how quick would she fly to my rescue! She would find some means of getting me out of this living tomb. I long for daylight that I may know precisely my situation."

He found that his revolver was still left in his pocket, with his powder-flask and ammunition, but his captors had kept his rifle.

He sat for a long time upon the damp, hard rock, but finally dropped off into slumber, which lasted through the entire night; for, when he awoke, the first thing that attracted his notice was daylight shining through the round hole over his head, and which let in enough illumination to disclose the entire interior of his prison home—Grizzly Bear Cavern.

It was over fifty feet in diameter, very irregular in shape, tapering up to a height nearly half as great where the opening was to be seen. Every side inclining inwardly toward this, one glance only was needed to show the prisoner that it was utterly inaccessible, that no gymnast in the world could leave the cavern without assistance from the outer world.

He had some hope during the night, that some stream ran through it, and by means of a long tube he might succeed in escaping, but even this frail hope was dissipated, when he saw that it was not a stream, but a deep pool, which had gradually filled from the oozings through the sides of the rocks, and that when it reached a certain point, the overflow escaped by filtering through the ground and earth.

No; Ned did do it in a hurry. Young, vigorous, and healthy, he speedily regained his usual condition under the careful nursing of Nick Whiffles, who furnished him with an extra rifle, and took him on several hunts, before he pronounced him fit to engage in the recapture of his beloved Miona.

Just one week from the time of his emergence from the Grizzly Bear Cavern, Nick Whiffles declared that the time had come for the rescue of the affianced of Ned Mackintosh.

When he heard all, and especially the part that Miona herself had borne in his rescue, his emotions can scarcely be described.

"The noble, brave girl!" he murmured; "she shall be rescued! Only wait till I recover and am myself again!"

"Yas; the first thing is for you to be yourself again, and you ain't goin' to do that in a hurry."

But Ned did do it in a hurry. Young, vigorous, and healthy, he speedily regained his usual condition under the careful nursing of Nick Whiffles, who furnished him with an extra rifle, and took him on several hunts, before he pronounced him fit to engage in the recapture of his beloved Miona.

In such a place there was little difficulty in gathering sufficient fuel to last the entire night. When this was done, Mackintosh produced a match-safe, and had the fire started in a twinkling. Then they gathered about the crackling blaze, and while they ate their antelope-meat, discussed the all-important errand upon which they had come.

When the night had considerably advanced, the two stretched out, with their blankets about them, by the camp-fire. Calamity, who had spent most of the evening in sleeping at the feet of his master, now roused up, as if conscious of the responsibility that had suddenly been put upon his shoulders, and assumed an appearance of vigilance very comforting to his human companions.

"He can be trusted as well as ever!" inquired Ned.

"I think he's a little better, if anything," replied Nick, with no little pride. "He's more suspicious than ever, and he ain't apt to wait so long before he puts his teeth into the legs of the animals that come around him. I'd trust Calamity sooner than any human I ever seen."

Calamity was not forgetful of his duty, and he maintained faithful watch through the entire night. Nick Whiffles, as usual, slept soundly and sweetly until daylight, but the young man was so preoccupied with his love for and fear about Miona, that his rest proved very unrefreshing. He awoke several times through the night, and sat up and looked about him. Once each occasion he saw Calamity whisking about, and in and out among the trees, as lively and watchful as though his years were not rather heavy upon him.

Once the young arose and walked to the edge of the river, standing there a few minutes, and looking out upon its unruffled surface. The night was quite dark, so that the faint moon gave only a dim view of the gently-flowing river; but not a breath of air was stirring, and the deep, hollow silence of the solitude soothed his troubled spirit, and going back to the camp, he lay down and almost instantly fell asleep.

On this they expected to reach the vicinity of the Blackfoot village, and, from the present indications, a desperate game would have to be played before the jewel could be abstracted from the treacherous hand of Woo-wol-na. It was well that the lover had brought Nick Whiffles with him, for alone he had already worse than failed.

"If I had counted upon any double-dealing men," this said, "I would have brought a force with me that would have compelled him to perform his part of the bargain."

"I don't know as it would have done," replied Nick; "when a red-skin finds he is outwitted, he's apt to get desperate and play the old Harry."

"What would he do?"

"If he found he couldn't keep the gal, like enough he'd sink his tomahawk into her head, so you couldn't get her."

The two men loitered purposely on the way, so as to make sure of giving the North-West Company abundant time to get out of their reach. This was easily done, and early in the afternoon they caught sight of the returning canoes. Nick paddled up beside them to learn whether there was anything worth knowing. He was told that Woo-wol-na was there, and it was of him that they had purchased the valuable lot of peltries they were carrying back with them.

Several cautiously-put questions failed to discover that they knew anything about Miona. The Indians had probably taken care to keep her out of the way of all visitors, as it will be remembered that five years before no signs were seen of her or her mother when the Hudson's Bay men made their visit to the same place upon the same errand.

These indications, although very slight, were pronounced favorable by Nick Whiffles, and Ned Mackintosh was not a little encouraged by his statements to that effect.

"You see, if Woo-wol-na is there, I kin go straight into the village without any dodgin' or scurvintin', and I kin find out fur myself how the land lays."

"But he will be there to resist you nona-the less. You know his son?"

"Not much; have any of 'em been down in these parts since we cleaned 'em out so beautifully?"

"I haven't seen or heard of any. I don't think they will disturb you any more."

"I'd like to see 'em try it—that's all—I'd give a cargo of peltries if I could lay hands on that Mackintosh that played me such a trick four years ago. I heard he left the country after that."

"He ain't one of them Hudson Bay men, is he?"

"Does he look like it?"

"I think it is," was the reply.

"Where bound?"

"Down the river."

"Who've you got with you?"

"A young friend of mine, a sort of visitor in these parts."

"He ain't one of them Hudson Bay men, is he?"

"Does he look like it?"

"Not much; have any of 'em been down in these parts since we cleaned 'em out so beautifully?"

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"Where bound?"

SHAY.

BY JOE JOT, JR.

Do you know a man by the name of Shay?
Living here? You've seen him, eh?
I've often heard him talked about,
The meanest man without a doubt
That ever was born, so people say,
Is this notorious William Shay.

What rogues some people will get to be!
Indeed, it rather puzzles me
To think that in a decent town
A man's allowed to go his own way,
Having everything in his own way.
As this despicable William Shay.

They say he's a rogue of the deepest dye.
Will you be a man at the wink of an eye,
And lately in a drunken spree
He raised a muss and murdered three,
And swore they couldn't bring him to law.

He's a very terrible man to meet,
And no life's safe when he's on the street,
And he's always looking for a row,
And gets the best of it somehow,
And everybody here's afraid to

Open his head to this desperado.

I tell you, stranger, if such a cuss
Would go to cutting his shins with us,
There isn't a man in our town
That wouldn't hurry to shoot him down,
Or string him up to the highest limb

So quick that his head would never swim.

The blackest, bulkiest, rascal Shay

You've seen him, you say?

This monstrous, unholy rascal and thief,

I'd like to see him before I leave!

You are the man! Well, I do think!

I beg your pardon! What'll you drink?

In a Moment of Passion.

BY JENNIE DAVIS BURTON.

THE HUB

Snow had fallen from time to time until the sleighing was perfect. Sutton had his span of blacks put into the cutter, no easy task, for the fiery creatures had not been driven as much as formerly. The reason, that their master was more taken up with the attractions which Beacon street offered, and that the reunions there were too often supplemented by lansquenet or "Boston," while the fumes of champagne over night did not conduce to the clear eye and steady nerve required to keep the animals within bounds.

They were giving the groom trouble when Lonesley dashed up the stairs and into Sutton's room.

"Ready, Reeve? If we aren't off soon we'll have the party waiting. You don't look well old fellow."

"I've a splitting headache. Not a new experience, but inconvenient to day. The cold air may do it good."

"I wish you would let me say a word."

"Two of them, three, a dozen, if you like, so they don't comprise either a lecture or a piece of good advice. A stale story, those."

"It is only a warning this time. You are living too fast, and if you don't give over your loose habits you will come to the end of your tether sooner than you imagine. You haven't an iron constitution, and such as it is you are undermining it fast as a man can. With your talent it would not be pleasant to find yourself a hopeless invalid for life."

"You'll never find me such," said Sutton, coolly. "When I go that far I'll finish the course, depend upon it. Now—"

"Now you had better change teams with either Ward or me. Those horses of yours aren't safe; you'll get your neck broken with them yet."

"Terry Hart would sooner risk breaking her neck than bear a disappointment, and I promised her to drive the blacks. Much obliged for the offer, but I am quite able to manage my own team—my own affairs, too, if you'll pardon my saying it."

"Now, he's off in a huff," thought Lonesley, "and ten to one, he will be the more reckless because I interfered."

His apprehension was not realized. Reeve Sutton had too much sterling sense to resent the true friendliness which had prompted the other's warning, and he held the blacks in strong check, subduing their fiery paces and getting them thoroughly under control before he would permit that noted belle, Miss Teresa Hart, to take her place beside him. Thus it chanced that they were the last of the three couples who had elected to dine at Brookline that day. Lonesley had with him a sprightly married lady who played property to the party; and her sister, the pretty, rich Miss Breckinridge was with Ward, Terry Hart's cousin. Ward both saw the prettiness and coveted the riches of his little partner, and he started that morning with the resolve to drive into Brookline with his *fiancée* if she would accept him as such. He put his fate to the touch right speedily and was at once refused. Then he cursed himself for the folly which had left so much of the distance over which he must sustain the part of a jilted lover, not a pleasant role at any time, the more disagreeable now that Sutton was Miss Hart's companion. Ward liked his cousin Terry the better of the two, by far, but Millie Breckinridge had the most money, the best connections, and the finest establishment at her disposal. He had played for the highest stakes and lost, but was quite prepared to avail himself of his next best choice on the first opportunity which should offer, and felt tolerably sure of a favorable result, provided Sutton did not anticipate his proposal.

"Terry is as much in love with me as I am with her," thought Mr. Ward, complacently.

"But the trouble is, she's sharp enough to see the game I've been up to. She may take Sutton out of pique if he speaks to-day, and hang it all! the fellow looks as if he meant to."

The other cutter was close behind, the blacks coming with the long, smooth sweeps to which Sutton was holding them. He had found enough to do in this without saying much to his companion for a time, but that untiring pace and the sparkling day acted as exhilarants and he turned toward her, his face kindling.

"How do you like it?" he asked.

Terry shot one furtive glance at him from beneath her black, curling lashes, and took alarm at the expression he wore.

"Oh, this is well enough," she answered, distinctly, "but not at all what I was led to expect. I thought you promised me something unusual, Mr. Sutton. I want to fly, to go like the wind. This is not half exciting enough."

Sutton laughed.

"I'll give you what you want when we reach the mainland. Just here it would be dangerous. Don't do that, Ward; keep your horses steady, man. Mine will not stand it to have you run away from us now."

Ward had reined in his team with a suddenness which made them plunge, then, as the others came almost abreast, whipped them savagely into a mad speed. The blacks took this as a challenge, and laying back their ears, kept pace, but Ward either did not hear or did not choose to heed Reeve's warning cry.

Perhaps he meant to prevent the proposal of marriage which he feared Sutton might make—feared with good reason, for it had been in the latter's thoughts, expecting a different answer from that Terry had given, to make a pretty speech, bringing in the hope that they might glide on thus smoothly through life to together.

"Oh, Mr. Lonesley!" cried Mrs. Ames, looking back; "they are racing on the Neck. I wish girls did know something. Of course the gentlemen would not be so thoughtless unless they were urged to it. What is the matter?"

Without answering Lonesley turned aside, stopped and sprang out of the sleigh.

"Hold the lines a moment, please. I think Ward's horses are running away and I must try to stop them. Great heavens! is he mad?"

Wholly regardless of his own danger and that of the terrified girl beside him, Ward leaned out and made a cut at Reeve's nearest horse. Like a flash Sutton turned in his place, and passion-mad for the instant, brought the heavy end of his whip in a crashing blow down upon the other's head, and, losing his balance, was himself flung heavily to the ground. The reins were wound about his waist, and he was dragged, as it seemed to him, through a sultry blinding mist, which changed to blackness, and he knew no more.

He came back to consciousness in a place completely strange, and knew then that the glimmerings which he fancied dreams had been snatches of reality. They had shown him a low-celled, pleasant room, with muslin curtains and bright, home-made carpet, chintz-covered furniture and blazing wood fire, and stretches of snow rolling away over the near hills. Had shown him also a pair of sweet, pure eyes, full of compassion, as he fancied the angels' must be when they look down upon our struggles and temptations and weaknesses here below.

The room was in Hosea Grenval's farmhouse; the eyes, as he discovered afterward, belonged to Meta, the one daughter of the house. A fair girl, with a broad brow, a tender, red mouth, and bright brown hair, slender and tall, lovely now and bearing the promise of a beautiful womanhood.

Sweet, shy Meta! How well he grew to know the soft touch of her little cool hands; how restful it was to drive the fancies out of his surging brain by simply watching her as she sat near him unawares, and how pretty she was when she chanced to catch his glance upon her, and flushed to the roots of her clinging hair! It was due to Meta that he almost forgot to puzzle over the mystery of his being there.

Farmer Grenval explained it in a general way one evening when he was able to sit in a chintz-cushioned easy chair in that cozy corner where the fireglow was rudest.

"You were used up bad when you were brought here, Mr. Sutton, no mistake. Shouldered dislocated, wrists sprained, head cut open, and one line of blue and black bruises from head to foot. But, mother's a capital nurse, and between her and Dr. Stone they've brought you through easier I hoped for."

Reeve thought of the brain fever through the mazes of which he had wandered for weeks, but said nothing.

"Seeing as it was Rob Lonesley who sent the letter asking us to take you in and tend you well till he should come, mother couldn't have done more if you'd been her own."

"It was very kind of Mrs. Grenval. Very kind of you all. I fear I have been a great trouble."

"No trouble to do anything for a friend of Rob's. A fine boy, Rob Lonesley; he used to be with us considerably in the summer-times. Chummed with a nephew of mine at school, you see. Smart, too. I do hear that he wrote a book since, and got it sold; more'n they all do, from what the papers say."

"Yes, Lonesley has already had fair success as an author, and will gain more. But what put it into his head to send me here I can't imagine. How far from Boston did you say this is?"

"Nigh upon thirty miles."

"And Lonesley speaks of coming, too; a strange thing for him to do at this season. That was all his letter contained—yes, you have told me, and the person who drove me here said nothing to throw any light upon the matter. It is incomprehensible to me. I'm afraid until he does come, or I grow stronger, I must remain and try your patience still, Mr. Grenval."

"We're glad to keep you for your own sake, now," said with the simple truth which marks the true gentleman, whatever his outside polish may be.

So, Sutton stayed through his pleasant convalescence, gaining the hearty liking of the elder people, and watching Meta with a tender sort of admiration when she was with him, not thinking much of her when she was not, and never dreaming that he had appeared to her first like her ideal hero in his handsome young manhood, and that his very helplessness was among the things to win upon her. It made her pity him, and we all know what a short step leads from pity to love.

And she thought—in her innocence she might well be pardoned thinking—that his sincere liking was something more. She had never heard of Terry Hart, poor child! And as often occurs in like cases, through all his delirium Sutton had only revealed the better part of himself, and so vaguely that she believed him truly noble.

It was the middle of February when Lonesley came in upon them one day, unexpectedly.

"What, about again?" said he to Reeve, cheerfully. "I knew you couldn't help mending fast in such good hands. How do you find yourself?"

"All serene, thanks to the fact that my bump of inquisitiveness is not very strongly developed. But, now you're come, perhaps you'll explain how you came to land me here with such perfect lack of ceremony as attended the circumstance. My consent was an immaterial point, but how could you be sure of the result?"

"It was all right though!"

"Was it though? That is precisely what I want to know. Come, speak out, Lonesley. Let's have the truth, the whole truth, and—know the formula."

"The truth of what?"

"Everything. What's the matter, Rob?"

You are not generally so obtuse. Must I go through a full catalogue of inquiry? Why is this thus? Who brought me here, and why did he do it, and what has become of all my inquiring friends? Lonesley!" in an altered tone.

"The truth is, I feared trouble through Ward. You remember?"

"I remember. He must have been drunk, that day, I think, but I'd have chastised him soundly if I'd got the chance, the villain! Well, what else?"

"Nothing else, except that you were in no condition to be troubled."

"Thanks for your thoughtfulness while I was not able to look out for myself, but as I don't care to rest under the imputation of being a sneak and a coward longer than is absolutely necessary, I'll go back along with you, if I have your permission."

"I'm not going straight back. I came to say if you can bear the journey in week from this. I'll be here for you."

"I don't like to keep Ward waiting."

"He is not in the city just now," said Lonesley, turning his face away.

"Oh, in that case I don't mind. But I say, what of Terry? Has he been trying to turn her against me? He was sweet on her himself, you know."

"He is not now. I have not seen Miss Hart of late."

"Then she can't be going out so much. Is she wearing the willow for me, dear girl? I would like to know it."

"That is what they call it, I believe—wearing the willow," said Lonesley, and afterward, when he had gone, it struck Reeve that there was something strange in his voice and manner.

Had he kept something back? Did that something concern Terry? A couple of days brooding almost convinced him of it, and worked him into a state of nervousness which made inactivity a misery. When the farmer announced his intention of driving to Southron on the third day, he was alert upon the instant.

"Southron. That is on the Boston line, is it not? Then it will not be an inconvenience for you to take me that far upon my route. I have decided to return immediately."

Nor would he be moved from his decision, held with regret by his host and hostess, in perfect silence by Meta, though her heart sank like lead. She sat looking steadfastly into the fire, while the great farm sled was brought to the door, and Sutton was darting back and forth, blither at the prospect of leaving than she had seen him before. She thought he was going without a word, but he came in presently with his light overcoat buttoned to the throat, and cap and gloves in his hand.

"Will you forget me before I come again, Meta?"

"You will come again?" the load suddenly lifted from her heart.

"Of course, and until I do you must write to me. Will you?"

The promise was given, a moment more and Ward was gone, but Meta had a hope to live upon, and was happy with that blissful consciousness of first love which makes the whole world rosy, and life perfect only once to us all.

He reached the city, lunched at a restaurant, thence to his lodgings and dressed, and went without one moment of unnecessary delay to call upon Terry Hart. He gave an involuntary start as she entered the parlor where he awaited her. She was so changed! People had called her dazzling, brilliant, a passion-flower, a glorious woman, but in this pale shadow of a glory departed he scarcely recognized his love. For that very reason, perhaps, his impetuosity burst all bounds, and he was pouring out his heart to her almost before he was aware. Her haughty glance and uplifted hand checked him in the very midst of his impetuous speech.

"You dare to say words like these to me," she cried; "of all men—you! You dare to intrude upon me when you must know that the sight of you fills me with abhorrence. You might have been satisfied without this. Was it not enough that you made me desolate?"

He looked at her in utter amaze, then comprehended vaguely as he observed that she was dressed in deepest mourning.

"Forgive me!" he said in a subdued voice. "You have had a loss. I did not know."

Over the face of the girl went an intense white gleam.

"I never will forgive you," she said, hardly, "I may tell you now, I loved my cousin Ward. For you, if I ever see you again, I hope it may be when the doom you merit has been pronounced upon your head. But—I am still a woman—I will not be the one to bring it upon you."

She left him with the words, and like one dazed, Sutton passed from the house. He was standing in utter oblivion of passing events before it, when some one hurried up and grasped his arm.

"For the Lord's sake, Reeve," cried Lonesley's voice, husky with agitation. "What evil fate sent you here?"

"You promised to wait until I came again, and I relied on your promise. Come, you mustn't stand here."

With a touch of his hand he twirled the other's hat low over his face, and beckoning him into it. He followed, and scarcely seemed to breathe freely until they were two alone in his own lodgings.

"Now," said Sutton, more than ever bewitched, "is all the world mad, or am I?"

"Ward is dead. Struck on the temple and killed outright by that blow you gave him. Now you understand why I hurried you to that out-of-the-way place and kept the secret of your whereabouts as I did. I meant to have it broken to you when I went there, but my resolution failed me. I have been making arrangements for your escape from the country—oh, dear me! I might have known it. I have told him truly now."

Sutton was far from strong yet. He had fallen back in his chair with a face like death, but had not lost consciousness as the other thought. Better if he had. Dead! Ward dead. It went through and through his brain like some weird, terrible refrain. He had not meant to do it, but in a moment of passion he had taken a human life. That bitter knowledge would never cease to haunt him to his dying day. In a moment of passion he had wrecked the fair promise of his own future, lost every hope and aim which makes life seem a pleasant thing to hold. He felt stunned, but he was submissive as a child in Lonesley's hands, and that true friend served him faithfully as a brother. Three days later he was on an outward-bound steamer *en route* for Havre, and did not know how he had been sought by the police, nor how narrowly he had escaped from them.

It was not until he was safe away that Lonesley took time to think, and then his heart misgave him for having sent Reeve to Grenval's home. He was troubled with fear for Meta's peace. He realized at last that it was the glance of those heavenly clear eyes had left him incapable of broaching the other's unsuspected crime beneath that roof. The memory of those eyes lingered with him, and guided him clear of the reefs on which he had been in danger of stranding before, the temptations which beset young men in cities. Though they were intimates, he had never been